those lands to them and also to assign to the Pulayas any other lands that might be available on the sides of the paddy fields or canals.

Dewan's reply.—The Peishkar will be asked to submit proposals for settling the Pulayas on some of the waste lands in the Thiruvalla and Chengannur taluks.

(2) Forest Revenue.

13. The need for the better administration of the Forest Department by developing its resources.

Mr. C. Padmanabha Pillai (Member, Quilon taluk) first referred to the system of engaging contractors for working down timber from the forests, and said that it was detrimental to the interests of the Government. He pointed out that contractors were engaged probably because the forests had not been opened up by roads, and there was difficulty in removing the timber. In his opinion, contractors should never be engaged for the purpose, but the exploitation of timber should be done departmentally. To facilitate this, it was necessary to improve the communications in the forests. In that connection, he suggested that electric tramways, aerial tramways by rope-ways, and also removable light tramways might, with advantage, be tried. The capital expenditure for such works should be considerably increased. Owing to the importance of the question, he would go to the length of suggesting that one year's expenditure on the Engineering Department might be allotted for opening up the forests, and, if that were done, the receipts of the department would steadily increase and several valuable things in the forests such as guttapercha, dye-stuffs, turpentine, tar and resin could be easily worked down, to the advantage alike of the Government and the people. Another suggestion he had to make was that saw-mills should be installed in convenient places in the forests and the timber converted into materials and removed to the plains. That would also leave a lot of firewood for the people's use.

He next suggested the desirability of introducing the keddah system of capturing elephants as in Mysore. The pit system was an antiquated one.

[Mr. Rama Rao, the Conservator of Forests, explained to the Member that the keddah system was tried here in 1052, but it was found that the mortality in the captures was much heavier than under the pit system.]

The Member, however, disagreed and said that, with a greater amount of care, the keddah system could be successfully tried. He said that it was the more necessary to introduce keddah operations here, as the elephants in the State forests were of the best kind.

The Member next dwelt upon the hardships caused to the people by the recent increase in the tariff value of teak and blackwood. When the monopoly for the purchase of teak and blackwood granted to Messrs. Wallibhoy Kadhirbhoy & Co., Bombay, was recently abolished by the Government, the people hailed the measure with delight. But simultaneously with the abolition, the tariff rates on the two species of timber were nearly doubled. The consequences to the public were more disastrous than before. No one could purchase any timber even for house-building at the present abnormal prices. The depots were overstocked but it was of no benefit to the country. He prayed that the tariff rates should therefore be reduced.

The next point dealt with was the necessity of the Government waiving their right to the teak and other Royal trees standing on private lands. The Member said that, under existing arrangements, the owners not only did not take care of the trees, but even wantonly destroyed them, as they were not to be of any benefit to them. At present one-half the value was allowed as *kudivila* to the owner. But he contended that the full right over such trees should be given to the owner, as was the case in many parts of British India.

Lastly, he pointed out, for the information of the department, that some of the Forest subordinates such as Guards were getting lands registered in their names

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purely as a matter of speculation and were selling them at higher prices. He requested that the matter should be looked into.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

14. Hardships caused to the people by certain proceedings of the Forest Department.

Mr. Padmanabhan Parameswaran (Member, Pathanapuram taluk) said that his first point was about the delay in the issue of free passes for the removal of junglewood trees &c., from registered lands. At present the owner had first to fell and stack the timber and get a certificate from the Proverticar to the effect that the trees stood on a registered land. With the certificate, the owner had to make an application to the Divisional Forest Officer for a free pass. The application would very likely sleep in the Divisional Office, if the owner did not himself follow it and get it forwarded to the Range Officer for verification and report. His next turn was to wait on the Range Officer and take him to the land and get a list prepared of the trees or other articles sought to be removed. The Range Officer forwarded his report, together with the list, to the Divisional Officer. To obtain the pass without further delay, the owner or his man would have to visit the Divisional Forest Officer again, and he would then get a pass, if no further reference be thought necessary by that officer. By that time several months would have elapsed and the timber or other articles would have to lie during the long interval at the place at the owner's risk. The owners might not get the passes at all if they did not actually interest themselves by following their applications from office to office. It was regrettable that no attempt was made by the superior officers to scrutinise the number of such applications pending in the several Range and Divisional Offices and to enforce the prompt issue of the passes. In British India, no such passes were insisted on, and rightly ; because it was obviously the duty of the Government, through their Forest officials, to take care of their forests and see that no timber or other produce was fraudulently removed therefrom. Instead of doing so, the *onus* of proving that the articles removed were removed from one's registered land was unjustly shifted to the owner's shoulders. He therefore prayed that the system of passes should be done away with, and, if that could not be done, the power of granting them should be vested in the Range Officer. If the fear was that the Ranger might collude with the applicant and cause loss to the Government, the Member thought that the Ranger had greater facility to do so under the existing arrangement, taking refuge under the Divisional Forest Officer, on whom lay the entire responsibility.

[The Conservator of Forests explained to the Member that the delay was, in most cases, due to the circumstance that the owners failed to keep the boundaries of their lands clear. Even the Proverticar was unable to identify the boundaries in some cases.]

The Member said, in reply, that the lands were, in some cases, registered without the applicants seeing them. It was the duty of the Land Revenue Department to demarcate the land on the ground before preparing the *olugu*. That was never done. He suggested that, at least in the case of new registries, the applicants should be required to demarcate the land on the ground and then apply for registry. Under the above circumstances, the owners could not be held responsible for the existing state of affairs.

Dewan.—I think that it is necessary to insist on the Revenue Department demarcating the lands on the ground before registering them.

The Member went on to say that a time-limit should be prescribed for the issue of free passes and the power of granting them given to the Range Officer.

The second point urged by the Member was that there were extensive swampy areas within reserved forests, which were quite unfit for forest purposes and which were admirably suitable for cultivation. The department would not register such areas owing to a vague fear that injury might be caused to the adjoining forests, if those

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